

VERSE AND WORSE

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HAYMOND

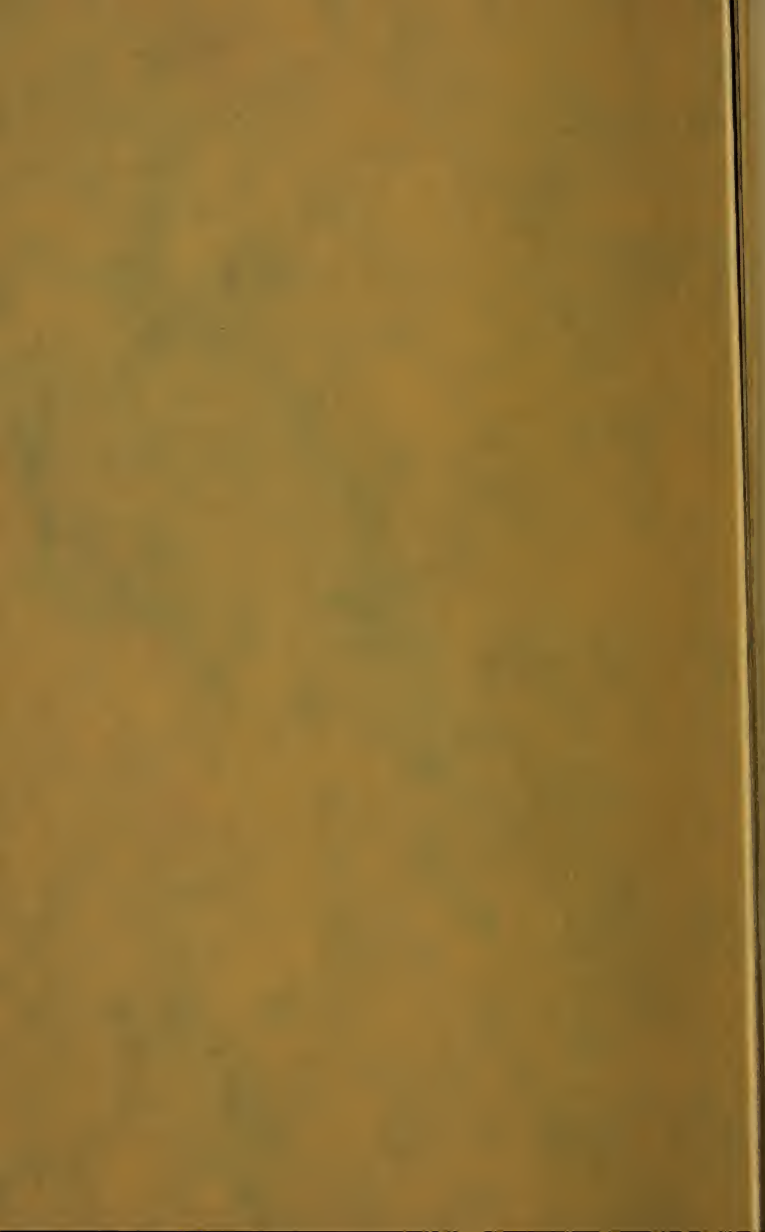


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VERSE AND WORSE



NORAH LEE HAYMOND

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BY

NORAH LEE HAYMOND



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By conforming to meter and form, poems
of passion lose their fire and strength and
become meaningless words.

JUST AS I AM

Dedicated to myself

I'M not pretty nor ugly, I'm just sort
of plain,

An every day sort of girl.

I love music, a good book, some quiet
life,

Yet a little of society's whirl.

I talk some, play better, and dance

With some show of grace.

So I think I'm just unpopular because

Of my plain little sallow face.

I do everything I ever heard of
That a girl's supposed to do,
Drive, ride, swim, skate,
In sports I excel, it's true.

My friends all say I'm clever
When they read my jingles and
rhymes,
My verses and songs and stories
Of love and adventures and crimes.

They say, "I wish I could dance like
you."

And, "It's wonderful the way you
play."

Then they walk away to their tea or
dinner

And leave me alone all day.

And I sit by my fire alone,

And think and dream and plan

For the day when some one will come
along

To take me just as I am.

There isn't a soul I know of—
From the end of the Earth to the
end—
In whose heart I hold first place.
I'm just an acquaintance,—a friend.

Yet I'm starving for love and atten-
tion,
Starving for some one to care,
Starving for just some small part
In the gay life out there.

I'm a woman in mind and body,
And with the passion that's in my
soul,
The love and companionship I'd give
a man
Can neither be bought nor sold.

But I'm an after-thought, just an
after-thought.

Isn't that sad to you?

To be thought of just when every
one else

Has been thought of ahead of you?

WITH THE DUSK

Dedicated to Billie

YOU come to me always with the
dusk,

That's why I love it so;

When the shadows lengthen, and the
day has gone

Where all the days must go,—

Into the making of a past,

That each one of us must own;

And some are good while some are
bad

With sins for which to atone.

Now you and I, we've sinned and
sinned—

In the eyes of all the folks,
Because we've given each other of
love

Nor saddled ourselves with yokes.

It's really amusing to try to figure
What the world calls wrong, or right,
In the giving and taking of the treas-
ures of love,

In the darkness, in the light.

Wrong unless fetters of iron-bound
law

Hold Cupid hard and fast,
And thus must two who really hate
Cling together until the last.
Now for instance, there's you and I,
They say we've done wrong, dear,
Because there's no fetter outside of
my love
To bring and hold you here.

Yet, with the dusk you always come,
And I am always waiting.
There couldn't be in this whole world
A happier, more perfect mating.
And if our lot be atonement for sin
In the shaking of life's dice—
Having known your love, makes it
 well worth while.
I am willing to pay the price.



A RHAPSODY

To P. L. F.

YOU go to my head like wine,

 You wonderful, wonderful girl.

One tiny kiss from your passionate
 lips

Sets my every sense a-whirl.

The touch of your hands against
 mine,

Is so maddeningly, poignantly sweet,

That insane with adoration,

I kiss your dear little feet.

I should die if you were unyielding,
Or even passive cold.
But you answer my caresses
With a wealth of passion untold.

I don't believe that Heaven—
Knows a greater bliss than this,
Just holding you always in my arms
And feeling you thrill with my kiss.

LOVE'S DEATH

Dedicated to A. B. S.

WINTER and cold bleak darkness,
Shadows everywhere,
The whistling, roaring winds are
screaming,
Death is in the air.

Like a poisonous serpent it creeps
along,
Ready with deadly bite,
To destroy all things too weak and
frail,
To combat its fatal might.

The little brown and curled-up leaves
That rustle around my feet
Are dead, and they carry death's dry,
 dull song,
With them along the street.

The naked limbs of all the trees—
Are writhing with the cold,
But they have died that they may live
 again
New glories to unfold.

Each delicate, lovely, little flower,
Tinted and scented today,
Is gone to-morrow forever,
It's beauty withered and grey.

And so it is with my poor soul,
The icy hand of death—
Is clutching and clawing, trying to
destroy
The little life that's left.

'Tis the icy hand of a selfish love
That took all and gave no return,
That's clutching and clawing at my
heart
With fingers that freeze and burn.

I'll always look on the beauties of
Spring

With pity in my eye,

Knowing that Winter will claim them
all

They must give up their beauty and
die.

And the very Sun that's wooed them

And kissed them in the Spring,

Looks on in coldness when the wintry
winds

Their death song begins to sing.

And love—like Winter,

With its scorching breath,

After taking and tiring

To the heart brings death.



TWO SUITORS

I AM a woman, fair to behold,

Two suitors have come to me ;

One is rich, in measures of gold,

While the other is poor you see.

They each want my future,

To have and to hold forever and a
day ;

Now, the question arises, which shall
I wed—

Which shall I send away ?

The one who is rich in measures of
gold,
Is old, and feeble, and ill,
In yielding to him, my body is sold
For comfort and ease, without thrill.

I'd have my own car, and castles and
gems,
Everything money can buy.
But whenever I think of the touch of
him,
I always shiver and sigh.

My other suitor, the one who is poor,
As the world counts, in measures of
gold,
Is rich in the priceless possession of
youth,
With health and strength untold.

My heart goes out to him who is
young,
For youth will call to youth,
I have weighed them and found riches
wanting,
I shall marry for love, and truth.

LOST

HAVE you ever stopped to ponder,
 Stopped to think—stopped to
 wonder
At the devilish fascination of the
 flesh—
When you feel your arms are holding
Softly closing—close, enfolding, to
 your heart
 Her form of dainty grace?
You think not then of the why nor
 wherefore
Of passion, and its all-consuming fire.
You only know you hold the flesh that
 Answers your desire.

There is no thought of morrow 'till the
dawn begins to spread

And peeping thro' the drawn shade
lights her dusky head.

Why does sadness linger where such
bliss has been,

Does conscience always taunt one
with its endless noisy din?

Or, are there other Gypsy souls as
free from care as I—

Who give, and take to the utmost
dregs, and all the laws defy?

Why turn away from passion, why let
it pass you by—

Always in the future with keen regret
to sigh?

Why miss the thrill—the madness—
of that wondrous, throbbing
pain,

That thru endless years of yielding
may not be yours again?

Take what life will give, weighing
neither time nor cost—

Lest—thru anticipation—'tis forever
—lost.



WILL YOU REMEMBER

I CANNOT forget that one scarlet
kiss—

My lips were burning slaves of pas-
sion,

Yours, passive cold.

Do you remember?

It was at parting that it came, by
you all unsought—

But, ah, it was in answer to my pray-
er for touch of you.

Can you remember?

You would have passed me by,
Little dreaming that the watching
fates

Would make you yield to my desire.
You bent and placed upon my lips
That one scarlet kiss (I cannot for-
get).

Were you conscious of the touch of
my lips on your mouth?

Will you remember?

TOO LATE

TWO big, wonderful eyes of brown,
Untouched as yet by love;
But wide-open, frank, the gaze of a
child,
Or is it the angels above?

I stand apart, just two eyes of blue,
Longing to come nearer;
To look long and deep in those wells
of truth,
Ah, nothing could be dearer.

To look long and deep, to call to life
The passion I know they're masking;
To see them answer my call of love,
To know all were mine for the asking.

I wonder—who will be the first,
To awaken that wonderful gleam,
To lift the veil of innocence,
To teach them to live, to dream.

To see that first wild startled look
At the first clear call of their mate;
To see the tender after-glow
As they falter and hesitate.

Oh, I wish it were these eyes of blue
Could do this wonderful thing;
But they are young, on the threshold
of life
While I'm old, and I've had my fling.

DEAR ONE

DEAR ONE, the purple night draws
nigh,

The shadows lengthen even as I sigh,

Do you remember, do you recall,

How I always came to you for love's
sweet cheer,

When night brought its secret dread,
its hidden sighs and tears?

I seem to see your dear blue eyes,
And hear your laughing voice,
As you hold me close and drive away
my fears;
But I am all alone, fearing the night,
Dear One,
For you've forgotten—
Oh, come to me across the purple
night and leave me never-
more,
And leave me nevermore, Dear One.

DESPAIR

*Dedicated to a woman of the streets
I once knew*

THE night is here, the dark, dark
night,

With all its shadows drear.

Alone, I lie upon my silken couch, un-
loved, unsought—

Yet, for one single word of love, could
my whole soul be bought.

I've sold my body o'er and o'er

To men who didn't care,

They've wanted only passion,

Not life's more precious ware.

Not one of them has ever tried
My heart or soul to find,
They seem to think there is no soul
In a woman of my kind.
They think I'm just a toy,
A thing made to amuse,
Or in their drunken passions
To annoy and abuse.

Like a common slave,
I've been bought and sold;
To each man's pleasure
For jewels and gold.
I've drunk to the dregs of sordidness
From passion's tinsel flask—
With not one real love in my whole
 life
As sunshine in which to bask.

There may be those who envy me
My jewels and earthly joy—
But I'd give them all for the love of
a man
And the right to a baby boy.
To be the wife of one good man
Who'd love me alone, no other—
To know the touch of baby hands
And voices calling me "mother."

But I sigh and sigh in vain,
For no one beneath the Sun,
Doth ask for my heart, my soul, my
love—

It's mere pleasure they want, and fun.
I've stolen away here all alone
The rest of my earthly days—
I'll spend in prayer and penitence,
For my past and it's wicked ways.
Maybe in the other world to come
My soul-mate I shall meet,
I purge my soul of its wickedness,
It shall be clean to lay at his feet.

I KISS YOU

I KISS your hair, each golden strand

A thrill unto my inmost soul
doth send.

I kiss your eyes, their glance so pure
Doth call anew and fresh enchant-
ment lend.

I kiss your rosy palms, your dainty
finger tips each one;

And then upon your lips, twin, scar-
let poppy buds—

At last I kiss you, ah, I kiss you.

FAREWELL

LEAVE me all alone to die, a weary

Lotus eater I

Upon this Isle.

As the crimson poppy sleeps, o'er my

soul this langour creeps,

I crave rest.

Weary of life's dreary pace, I rest at

last—

While memories flock my endless

dreams to grace.

I lie here day by day alone, where the

Lotus dust is blown.

The kindly winds will soothe my soul,
and then the price of death
extol.

Around my neck I feel your arms, but
your lovely earthly charms
Cannot undo what Fate has done, the
Lotus bud its work's begun.
While I answer your desire, this crav-
ing which is scorching fire,
Consumes me.

On my bed of Asphodel, I'm sinking
slowly into Hell,
Farewell.

REDEMPTION

ALTHO' I've said to you, "farewell,
Through sin I go to death."
In penitence I cry aloud
With each faint, gasping breath.

For my sinful weakness,
Now I must atone.
I go to Purgatory—
To suffer there alone.

In cleanliness my soul shall soar—
The day of my release,
To meet you, in the promised land
Of Celestial love and Peace.

THE MISTRESS

Dedicated with respect to B. Y.

I'M only his mistress—
That despicable thing
That all good women
Call low and mean.

I have no soul,
In good folks' eyes,
I'm only made
To fear and despise.

While his wife's in her mansion
Glittering and bright,
Entertaining, carousing,
All thru' the night.

I'm alone in my cosy little nest,
Thinking of all he loves the best.
And I try, when he comes in at night,
To have everything comfy and just all
right.

And if his step is slow and tired
Then I know his day's been weary and
hard
And I humor his moods with tender-
est care,
I climb on his knee and ruffle his hair.

I rub my cheek 'gainst his stubby
chin,
And worry 'cause he looks so worn
and thin.
With my hands—I caress his face,
And try those weary lines to erase.

He looks at me and his tender smile
Just lights his face, and after awhile
His arms will tighten, I'll know his
kiss

As I give my lips in perfect bliss.

Sometimes I grieve when I'm alone,
That I have no children, have no
home,

I've given up all that my heart craves
Because we are convention's slaves.

But I never let him see my tears,
Nor tell him of my frights and
fears—

Of all this world he loves me best,
He comes to me for love and rest.

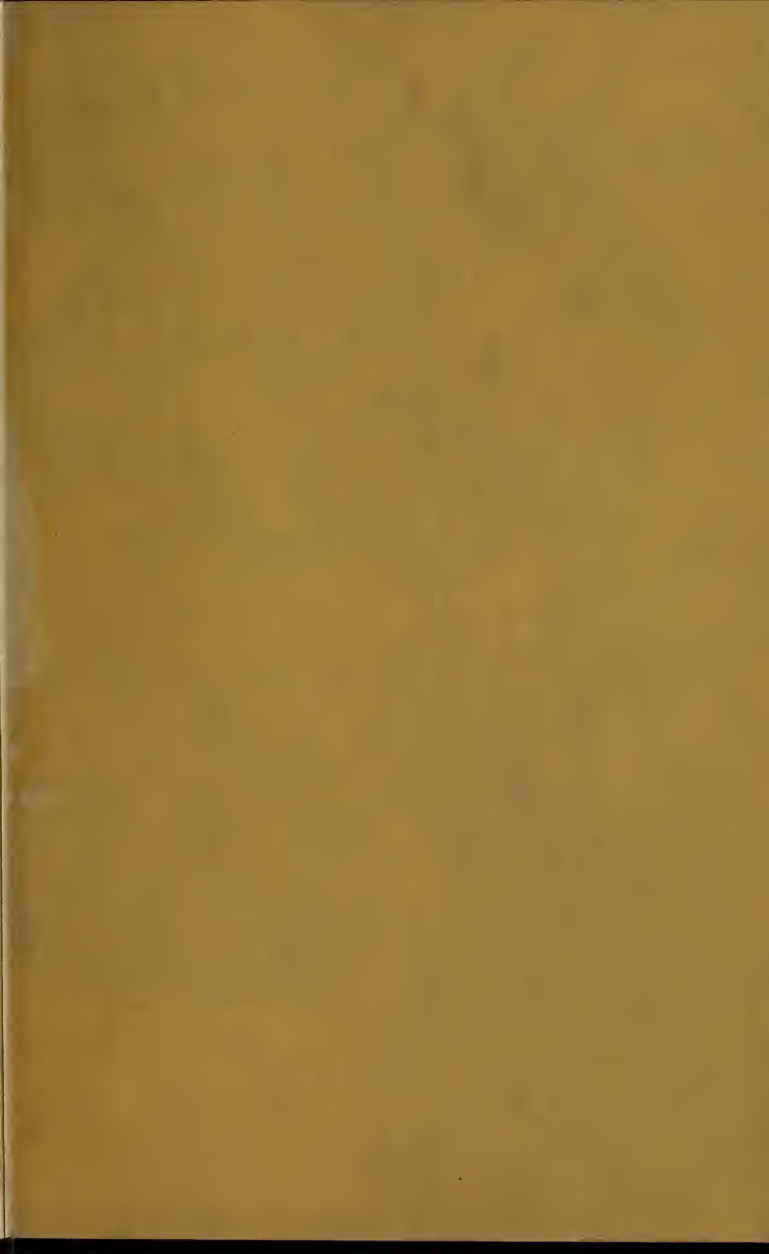
When he's near and I feel his arms,
Away with fears, doubts and alarms.
I rest 'gainst his heart like a tired
child

And yield to his kisses tender or wild.

But oh, I adore him soul and body,
And tho' the world calls this same
love, "shoddy,"

I'd give my life to save him pain,
I'd die for him, over and over again.

His wife has his name,
But I have his love;
And I know, by all the gods above
That I'm his mate even more than she,
Now tell me, which would you rather
be?

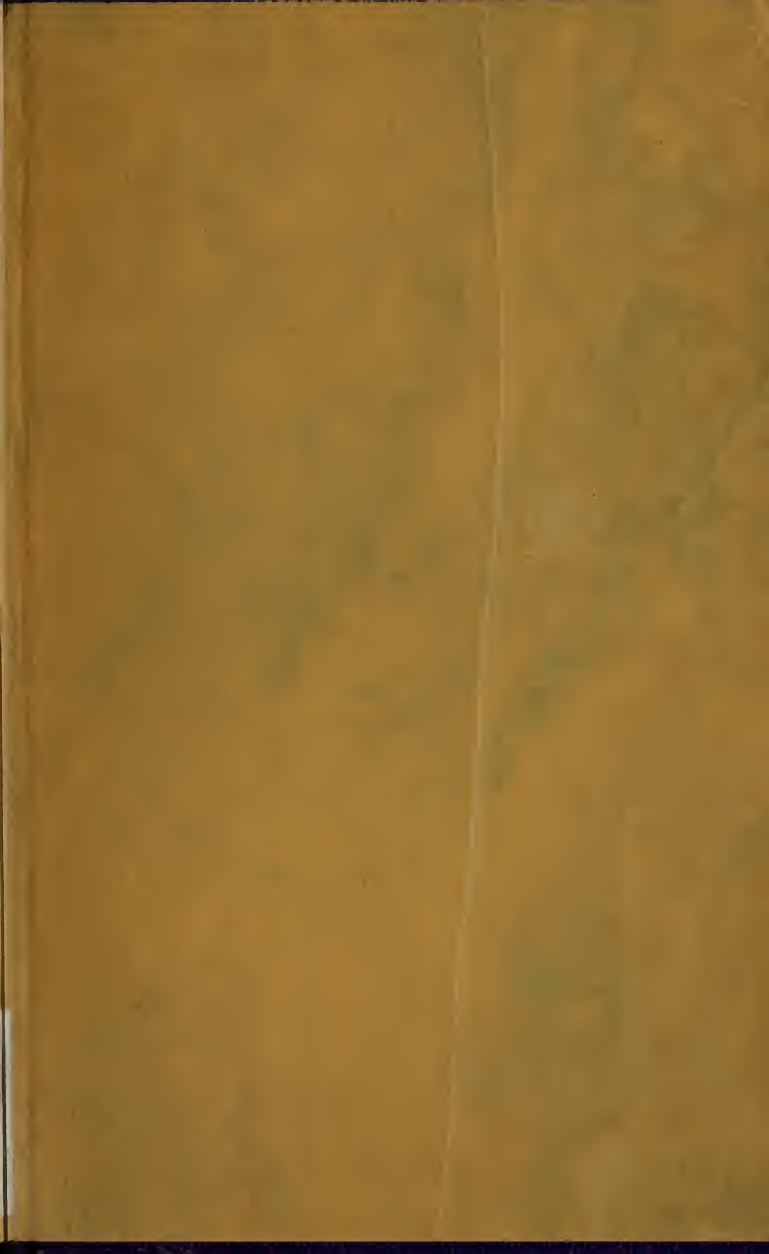


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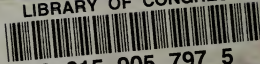
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